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**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD  
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

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Property Address:	<b>2200-02 14<sup>th</sup> Street, NW</b>	<b>X</b>	Agenda
Landmark/District:	<b>U Street Historic District</b>		Consent Calendar
		<b>X</b>	Concept Review
Meeting Date:	<b>March 28, 2013</b>	<b>X</b>	Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	<b>13-213</b>	<b>X</b>	New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	<b>Steve Callcott</b>		Demolition
			Subdivision

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Grant Epstein of Community Three Development LLC seeks conceptual design review for alterations and a six-story addition to a two-story building in the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Historic District.

**Property History and Description**

2202 14<sup>th</sup> Street was constructed in 1911 and designed by architects Spieden and Spieden, a prominent local firm active from the 1890s until the 1930s. As originally designed, the purpose-built commercial building had a slate pent roof with an eyebrow dormer, bracketed eaves, a brick façade with six-over-one windows on the upper floor and a 3' x 9' projecting storefront window on the first floor. The pent roof, dormer and brackets remain, but the slate has been removed. While obscured by a metal mesh screen, the second floor elevation remains intact underneath, including the original windows and decorative iron window boxes. The first floor has been altered with the loss of the storefront and damage to the brick when a later stone veneer was removed. Despite its somewhat deteriorated condition, as part of the review of a previous concept for the site in 2005, the Board determined the building to retain sufficient integrity to be considered contributing to the historic district. The corner lot at 2200 14<sup>th</sup> has been vacant since prior to the designation of the historic district in 1999.

A similar proposal was submitted to the Board by a different development/architectural team in November 2012 but was withdrawn on the eve of the HPRB meeting.

**Proposal**

The project calls for 2202 to be rehabilitated with a new storefront and façade restoration, and retention of the main masonry block of the building. A new six-story apartment building would be constructed on the vacant corner site, and behind and partially on top of 2202. The corner block would be masonry with punched windows and a series of four projecting bays on the upper stories along the W Street elevation; a tower element would mark the corner. The ground level would have retail windows on the 14<sup>th</sup> Street and eastern portion of the W Street elevations. The mass of the new construction on the 2202 lot would be set back approximately 21 feet from the façade and have a four-foot oriel projection. The sixth floor of the new construction would be set back 12 feet from the W Street elevation and 30 feet from the 14<sup>th</sup> Street elevation.

## Evaluation

The proposal's conceptual height and massing is similar to the Bowen YMCA redevelopment project being completed at the northeast corner of this intersection across 14<sup>th</sup> Street (illustrated below). Like that project, the corner would be developed with a tall, thin anchor of new construction with the new construction stepped back and behind the historic buildings to the north. The corner element at the Bowen project is six stories and the historic buildings three, so the proportions would be comparable to the subject proposal's five-story corner element adjacent to a row of two-story buildings. As seen in the project across the street, despite the corner element being several stories taller than the historic buildings, the thin proportions, masonry materials and overall vocabulary result in a compatible relationship and offers a good model for how taller new construction can be inserting appropriately in a context of smaller buildings.



The design's tripartite organization, proportion of masonry to glass, fenestration patterns, brick and precast materials, and projecting oriels are all elements that are compatible with the character of the historic district. As the design continues to be developed, thought needs to be given to the partial sixth floor. While set back from the side walls, it will be a visible element over top the surrounding historic buildings, and should be designed to be

fully incorporated into the architecture of the building. Consideration should also be given to the north party wall elevation, which will likely remain exposed above the adjacent historic buildings; this wall should be finished in a similar masonry material as the other elevations and may present an opportunity for at-risk fenestration. While a rear (west) elevation has not yet been developed, ensuring that the garage entrance is screened or enclosed will be important as it will be prominently visible from W Street.

The project will result in some alteration to the rear portion of 2202 and as it is further developed the method of supporting the additional floors without wholesale removal of the back of the building will need to be clarified. The plans call for locating the elevator core just outside the footprint of the historic building but one of the new stairs within it; otherwise, the demolition currently appears to be limited to penetrations through the side walls.

### **Recommendation**

*The HPO recommends that the Review Board:*

- *Find the general conceptual height, massing and architectural direction to be compatible with the U Street Historic District;*
- *Direct the applicant to further clarify the scope of demolition for the historic building and how the new construction above will impact it;*
- *Direct the applicant to continue developing the design, including the north and west elevations.*